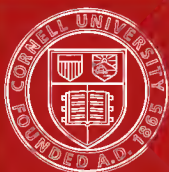


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THE TWILIGHT PEOPLE

*A few of these Poems have already been
printed in "The United Irishman," "Dana,"
and "The Irish Homestead."*

THE
TWILIGHT PEOPLE

BY
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TO
THE LADY OF
THE POPLARS

CONTENTS

	PAGE
The Twilight People	I
The Sheep	2
The Half-Door	4
The Poplars	5
The Sedges	7
Adoration	8
To the End of Days	10
Memory	12
From "The Book of the Pilgrim"	13
The Wild Rose	14
Invocation	15
On the Edge of the Desert	17
"The Love-Gift of Sorrow"	18
Homage	19
To the Lady of the Poplars	20
Two Paths	21
Song	22
Praise	23

CONTENTS

	PAGE
The Faun	24
A Song in Praise of Love	26
The Message	28
Shann Dubh	29
The End of the Quest	30
The Pilgrim	31
The Path	32
Remembrance	33
Loyalty	35
Envy	36
The Portent	37
A Vision of Hosting	39
Children of Kings	40
The Unpitying	41
In the Valley of the Hazels	42
A Dream	44
Outcast from Eden	46
Out of the Strong, Sweetness	47
The Enchantress	48
The Herdsman	50

THE TWILIGHT PEOPLE

It is a whisper among the hazel bushes ;
It is a long low whispering voice that fills
With a sad music the bending and swaying
rushes ;
It is a heart-beat deep in the quiet hills.

Twilight people, why will you still be crying,
Crying and calling to me out of the trees ?
For under the quiet grass the wise are
lying,
And all the strong ones are gone over the
seas.

And I am old, and in my heart at your
calling
Only the old dead dreams a-fluttering go ;
As the wind, the forest wind, in its falling
Sets the withered leaves fluttering to and
fro.

THE SHEEP

Slowly they pass
In the grey of the evening
Over the wet road,
A flock of sheep.
Slowly they wend
In the grey of the gloaming
Over the wet road
That winds through the town.
Slowly they pass,
And gleaming whitely
Vanish away
In the grey of the evening.
Ah, what memories
Loom for a moment,
Gleam for a moment,
And vanish away,
Of the white days
When we two together
Went in the evening,

Where the sheep lay,
We two together,
Went with slow feet
In the grey of the evening
Where the sheep lay.
Whitely they gleam
For a moment and vanish
Away in the dimness
Of sorrowful years,
Gleam for a moment,
All white, and go fading
Away in the greyness
Of sundering years.

THE HALF-DOOR

Dark eyes, wonderful, strange and dear
they shone,
A moment's space ;
And wandering under the white stars I
had gone
In a strange place.

Over the half-door careless, your white hand
A moment gleamed ;
And I was walking on some great star-
heaped strand,
For ever it seemed.

I would give all that glory to see once
more,
A moment's space,
Your eyes gleam strange and dark above
the half-door,
Your hand's white grace.

THE POPLARS

As I went dreaming
By the grey poplar trees,
They bent down and whispered
Words like these.

"In a far country
There is a lonely glen,
Hushed with the foot-fall
Of shadowy men.

"Shadowy, and silent,
And grey amongst the trees
That have long forgotten
The sound of the breeze.

"And one tall poplar
Grows in that land;
The chain of God's silence,
Held in his hand."

THE POPLARS

This I heard

As I went dreaming,

By the grey poplars

In the purple evening.

THE SEDGES

I whispered my great sorrow
To every listening sedge ;
And they bent, bowed with my sorrow,
Down to the water's edge.

But she stands and laughs lightly
To see me sorrow so,
Like the light winds that laughing
Across the water go.

If I could tell the bright ones
That quiet-hearted move ;
They would bend down like the sedges
With the sorrow of love.

But she stands laughing lightly,
Who all my sorrow knows,
Like the little wind that laughing
Across the water blows.

ADORATION

White brow, as faultless pure
As the watch tower
Of some white city,
Reared by gods in dim eternal story
Above the sea of time :
Round you light tresses, delicate,
Wind-blown, wander and climb
Immortal, transitory.

Red lips whose curvèd pride
Is still belied
By soft eyes forest-wild and full of pity
For all sorrow.

White hands, foam-frail you seem ;
A vanishing gleam
On the light breaking wave of beauty's tide :
You hold my destiny,
And the fate of all beside

Who follow
Eternally by ways apart
Over enchanted ground,
Lit with the radiance of no earthly day,
Where Angus' heart,
Burning through his stringèd lute,
Lures with a music sweeter than all sound
Wild-hearted ones, blind wanderers,
To go, with foot-fall mute,
By his own way.

TO THE END OF DAYS

I would seek out all frail immortal things
To make your praise :
That men may think of you and dream and
dream
To the end of days.
When the grey world a phantom goes
By that last way,
Your name will breathe again on shadowy
lips
And men will say
"The stars that are a living song of light,
By flaming seraphs hymned,
Burn low, but far beyond their wavering
night
Her beauty burns undimmed."
No empty praise, beloved, this I bring
Out of a bleeding heart :
Because I know all sorrow and joy to come
Have sundered us apart.

TO THE END OF DAYS II

All the long, sorrowful, glad years to come
To the end of days ;
Beloved, have hidden your beauty away
from me,
Who sing your praise.

MEMORY

It touched the city, and over all its clamour
Laid suddenly the peace of lonely ways;
Silent it stands, finding the ancient glamour
Purple-robed as in the old kingly days.

It touched the trees that all day long had
slumbered
As souls that wait the resurrection call;
And at its touch they stood forth dis-
encumbered
Of daylight that clung round them like a
pall.

It touched my heart, and deep within it
lying
(The barriers of a thousand ages gone)
The spirit woke and knew the life undying,
And freedom-winged sprang up to meet
the dawn.

FROM "THE BOOK OF THE PILGRIM"

Like a shadow I go in sunlit ways.
Why have you set me on this crazy path?
From the warm sun-life I must go apart.
I must go in the shadows, for my heart
Is like the waning moon with a vain love.
Yet with a glad quiet heart I move,
Lords of the flaming hours; for one who
 hath
A king's brow, and the proud quiet of a
 king
About him for apparel, and a king's voice,
Though his voice be the silence, whispered
 to me
Under the moon-white branches such a
 thing
As would make men in the cold ground
 rejoice,
For all their dead hearts, knowing of things
 to be.

THE WILD ROSE

Spring laughs along the way she goes
And her voice wakes on every tree;
Her way the way of the wild rose
All the young year's green heraldry.

Green branches bend above her head,
Green boughs drop down their bird song
sweet:
And all the forest green is spread
A pathway for her dancing feet.

O rose, wild rose, from ways apart
I cry, and must I cry in vain:
Red rose, for even in this dead heart
You can awake the spring again.

INVOCATION

Spirit whose beauty has so linked my
dream

Of that fair world to this that I would
deem

That other world scarce worthy of a
thought,

Or high endeavouring, were it not wrought
Of that same loveliness which fashioned
thine,

Here at thy beauty bowed as at a shrine
How shall I praise, how shall I sing you
sweet?

Along this path made quiet by your feet
I come with homage of a heart grown still

With adoration, Flame of beauty fill

This silence out of adoration wrought;

Thou shepherdess of every holy thought,

Goddess of Quiet, Light of hidden ways

Come as the quiet evening to the day's

head

**Of eve to holy silence quieted ;
Come as the golden moonrise, silently
Temper the white stars' cold austerity ;
And make this waiting heaven of my love
Worthy of thee as the white ways above.**

ON THE EDGE OF THE DESERT

Perhaps we stood together, you and I,
Hopeless and motionless by some grey sea
That mocked monotonous our sad hearts' cry
Seeing all joyous things go drifting by
Afar beyond our calling. Or it may be

That we two went together where the glow
Of some great joy that burned to noonday
heat
Had parched our hearts away, and we
would go
To some valley far distant, where we might
know
Sorrow a dew about our burning feet.

Beloved, what of all our wandering?
Either joy dead or sorrow a fugitive
For ever, and this only a certain thing;
Your eyes, tear-dimmed, seek mine for com-
forting ;
And there is no comfort that I can give.

"THE LOVE-GIFT OF SORROW"

For all my sorrow I have been more glad
Than those that know but joy, for I have had
This thought that is of all my thought
more near

Than my own heart, this thought for solace.

Dear,

In the long years to come when you have
grown

More gentle, almost lovelier, having known
The things that wait about a woman's
heart;

One day when you have turned from all
apart

And come to your own self again, a thought
Will come to you, immortal, being wrought
Out of all love and sorrow in my own heart,
And you will bend your head lower and
sigh

Because of that great love that you passed by.

HOMAGE

To the wind the trees bow,
And the sedge to the little breeze,
And my heart to you, white brow,
And deeper than these.

When the wind passes
And the little breezes die,
The sedge will be raised from the grasses,
The trees to the quiet sky.

Trees will find homage new
And the sedge unmindful be :
But my heart bows to you,
White brow, eternally.

TO THE LADY OF THE POPLARS

A song for you, a song I made
Of glimmering moons and moon-white
ways,
And branches woven into shade
Where quiet goes; to make your praise,
I sought in these, and dreams of these,
My Lady of the Poplar trees.

Ah, deeper quiet he must seek,
And deeper-shadowed ways I ween,
Peace hidden of no earthly trees,
Radiance no earthly moon has seen,
He must seek out who sings to please
My Lady of the Poplar trees.

TWO PATHS

All our path was blown upon by winds of
flame:

Heart to heart they glowed and flashed
along the way we came:

Cruel spears those flames were, the red
glow our hearts that bled;

All our path was crimson with the tide
they shed.

Flameless now our pathway to the mountain
brow;

One pale star, alone, lights all our wander-
ing now,

But the long rays quiver down like great
arms thrown apart

Drawing us together to its flame-white
heart.

SONG

Dear eyes, dark eyes,
Light of all my days,
Brown eyes magical,
Deep as forest ways,

Filling my heart's deep
Places where she moves,
Full of the strange light
That my heart loves.

God in the quiet,
By Paradise' stream,
Called you to being
Out of a dream.

Dear eyes, dark eyes,
Light of all my days,
Magical as twilight,
Deep as forest ways.

PRAISE

Dear, they are praising your beauty,
The grass and the sky :
The sky in a silence of wonder,
The grass in a sigh.

I too would sing for your praising,
Dearest, had I
Speech as the whispering grass,
Or the silent sky.

These have an art for the praising
Beauty so high.
Sweet, you are praised in a silence,
Sung in a sigh.

THE FAUN

Tell me, O happy wandering shade, who
knew

Our earth in gladder times, before that
horde

Horse-hearted, lust-embittered, heavy-eyed,
Trampled the golden fields of Arcady
With leaden hooves. O happy, happy shade,
When the hours went light-hearted, and
the earth

Had still a music for their dancing feet.

O happy shade, speak, speak to me of days
Sated with golden hours that leaped at last
To glorious consummation on the pyres
Of their own dying splendour; and of dusk
That led to life anew with new delight;
When voices, sweeter than the breath of
dawn,

Sang, mellow-throated, through the evening
woods;

Or Pan himself, low breathing melody,
Made all the listening woods with slumber
glad ;

Until the moon in her far quiet world,
Grew pale with envy of your forest joys :
O wandering shade, what joy of all your
joys

Has drawn you with its very memory
From Lethe's ways to peer with wistful
eyes

Upon the threshold of a world grown grey?

A SONG IN PRAISE OF LOVE

Love that is lord of happy hours
Can pipe in many lays :
Sing like a bird in leafy bowers,
Or gladden lonely ways.

To meek or proud, to low or high,
When that old tale is told ;
Though love be shyest of the shy
He can outface the bold.

For love, though he be tyrant, dowers
His captive with such grace,
That over all the world he towers
And wears a kingly face.

A SONG IN PRAISE OF LOVE 27

Ah love, my lord, if I could sing

Thy praises manifold ;

The books that all the world could bring

Would not my ditty hold.

THE MESSAGE

A wind from the south is stirring
The summer grass;
Low, low it is bending
Where I pass.

Is it for joy or sorrow
That so you move?
Will you not tell me, low
Wind that I love?

What have you heard that you bend
So when I pass,
Of eyes that are kind or scornful,
Bending grass?

Vain, vain your concealing !
I know it all;
For sorrow the grasses' bending
And the wind's fall.

SHAUN DUBH

They are standing and laughing one to
another as I go by,

“Was there ever a fool so wrapped of his
own folly as he?”

They do not know, the foolish ones with
their empty glee,

The joy unknown to the hearts of the gay
that is breathed in a sigh.

This thought it is I have hidden deep, O
deep, in the heart of my joy;

I would rather be standing now where I
could see the dark eyes of her,

Than to be the prince of the Greeks in the
young youth of the world,

And I to be kissing the red lips of Helen
of Troy.

THE END OF THE QUEST

O heart, to follow after
For all your days,
Where with light feet she goes
Laughing to the wild rose,
And in her laughter
The wildness of forest ways.

O heart, O heart, to find her
In the deep wood,
Lighting a moment's space
Some shadow-haunted place;
Creep there behind her
Enthralled of the quiet mood.

O heart, O heart, to clasp her!
Heart, foolish, proud,
Would not the light grow sad,
O blind one, clasped of shadow?
Will sunset gates of jasper
Swing wide to the east-cold cloud?

THE PILGRIM

A myriad golden suns have burned
 Into my heart and left it cold,
And all the old time seems but a tale
 To some half-listless hearer told,
Some drowsy half-articulate rhyme
In this dim ingle nook of time.

O fiery-hearted days of old,
 In vain you flowed a burning tide;
In vain you poured your spendthrift gold;
 The vanishing splendour of your pride
Lives but a flickering torch to light
My feet into a deeper night.

THE PATH

Tremulous grey of dusk
 Deepening into the blue,
It is the path that leads
 Ever to you.

Child of the dusk, your eyes
 Quietly light my way:
Quiet as evening stars,
 Quiet and grey.

All the magic of dusk,
 Tremulous grey and blue,
Gathers into my heart,
 Quiet for you.

REMEMBRANCE

Deep in some ancient forest fragrant with
primeval dew

Two stately forest trees with intermingling
boughs we grew.

When I went fierce in gold and black by
cave and rock and pool

And wooded way, you went beside me
lithe and beautiful.

When challenging the light exultant
through the air I sped,

You flew beside me; all the heaven was
our bridal bed.

And when beneath the soundless deep of
watery ways I went

For you I fought the hosts of ocean proud
and jubilant.

Ah, gladly would I go again upon a way
that brings

Me here, to read again the tale of all my
wanderings

In your dark eyes that for a moment look
with love grown bold,
Then droop 'neath gentle lids half conscious
of the things they hold.

LOYALTY

When I would look upon the stars
You drew away my eyes,
And made your white hands prison bars
To shut away the skies.

But this I do avow and say,
And I can shortly prove,
The greater homage I did pay
Of a more royal love :

In all that starry world, I knew
I could but see your eyes ;
Then, dear, I was not false to you,
But traitor to the skies.

ENVY

Pine tree swaying, swaying slowly,
 Envy not my Lady so,
Though she moves with lovelier motion
 Than your swaying boughs can show.

Sigh not, little breeze, Oh, sigh not
 In the tree-tops everywhere ;
Though you have no sound more joyous
 Than her laughter on the air.

Pout not so your lips, red rosebud,
 Red lips green-engarlanded ;
Though her mouth has lovelier moulding
 Round her soft lips' lovelier red.

Envy not, O wild red rosebud,
 Sighing breeze, and pine tree tall,
One whose beauty makes the world you
 Live in, lovelier for you all.

THE PORTENT

Pale shadows, one by one, about my bed
Came trooping, with bowed head;
And sad, and calm dead eyes,
Like frozen lake-water
No wind can stir;
And looked on me a while
Like those faint forms of the beloved dead,
Some dream has won out of their paradise:
A little while, and then
Faded away from me.
Ah, surely thus,
And with such eyes looked sad Eurydice;
When, from the arms of Orpheus,
And from the dawning of glad golden days,
She sank down suddenly again
To that cold throne
In Lethe's sunless ways.
So they went vanishing away, but one
More sorrowful than all

Returned to me alone ;
And looked on me as if it would have
 stirred,
But feared, with some dread word,
Silence more terrible,
And stood a while in doubt
Swaying about,
But came to me at last, and stooped, and
 said,
Half-whispering, "*She is dead.*"

A VISION OF HOSTING

What have the heavens for their wonder
of starry glory
To show like these?
I have seen in the flashing of their white
swords the story
Of victories.

Forth they go, the conquerors, the path of
their going
To the world's end;
Greet the stars, their brothers, and shout
in the sunrise knowing
The sun their friend.

Forth they go, uncaring, as fitteth immortals,
How the quest ends:
Here, or beyond red seas, in the flaming
portals
They will greet friends.

CHILDREN OF KINGS

Listless the world dreams on with heavy
lids ;

All beauty lives but in dead carven stone ;
Grandeur is shut into the pyramids :

Our love repeats some ancient singer's
moan :

And all our striving can but bring again

A life wrought out and perfected by ancient
men.

O miserable race to live so late,

We can but worship that which taught
the Greek,

Knowing that great perfection, 'tis our fate

To lose, by very knowledge, that we seek ;
Save where an instant only, through some
dream

Of the world's passion the white limbs of
Helen gleam.

THE UNPITYING

I have been traitor to the stars,
A renegade from sun and dew ;
O heart that fixed my prison bars,
I have been faithful still to you.

I know the sun is comrade true,
And still a friend in every star
I know, and round me falls the dew :
O heart still cold to me you are.

IN THE VALLEY OF THE HAZELS

All along the way that winds beside the
fairy mound
Where the wind-blown bells beneath the
hazel branches sound,
Quietness and peace were on the trees as
we went by :
Glad with peace and quietness we wandered,
you and I.

Bending back you smoothed away the
tresses from your eyes ;
Faery grace in every feature, I, with no
surprise,
Would have seen you float away upon the
air's deep blue :
But your human heart, my bird, was here
with me I knew.

THE VALLEY OF THE HAZELS 43

Child, I think from out that world of beauty
you were sent :

In your guiding presence fearless I a
stranger went ;

I a child of night-time, you a daughter of
the sun,

For the twilight time, my bird, I knew had
made us one.

A DREAM

Child, I thought that we two by some grey
 sea

 Went walking very quietly, hand in hand,
 By a grey sea along a silent strand:
And you had turned your eyes away from
 me

To where great clouds, uplifted mightily,
 Made on the far horizon a silver land.

And I would not recall your eyes to me,
 Because I knew from your shy clasping
 hand

How joy, within your heart a wanderer
 long,

 Outwearied now had come, a nesting bird,
And folded there his wings too glad for
 song;

And so I knew at last that you had
 heard

Through the long miles of grey sea-folding
 mist,
Soft as the breast of some glad nesting
 dove,
From grey lips grown articulate, twilight
 kissed,
All the secret of my unuttered love.

OUTCAST FROM EDEN

The senses stifle in this narrow lane
Where the fierce merciless summer sun
 beats down
On rows of stinking fish, and vegetables
Half rotten, and tortured flowers with
 stems of wire
Enforced to live beyond their fragrant hour,
A horrid death-in-life. O God of Heaven,
Who made the fish to go in cool green
 ways,
And flowers to laugh beside the water's
 edge,
And autumn fruit to lurk in odorous shade,
If thou rememb'rest Eden, Lord, look down
On this thy world, defaced by usage vile;
And send thy fire, and purge away the sin
Of those who, losing Eden, would destroy
That Eden left unto thy innocents.

OUT OF THE STRONG, SWEETNESS

Half-light of the dawn of the world,
Tremulous watery plains,
And chaos half dispelled
From the nebulous sea and land,
And through the gloom
The eyes of the gods.

Eyes of the gods, and silence,
And sense of the laughter of gods;
And there alone in the grey,
Slender and gentle and shy,
Large-eyed with wonder, and trembling,
A herd of deer.

And whisper less loud than a thought,
Little ones gentle and shy,
Deep in the heart of the wood
The silence awaits you, your home.
Hide from the gods and their laughter
In leafy ways.

THE ENCHANTRESS

Because you went beside me, smoothing
lightly
Your light tresses the wind set waver-
ing,
All the hours went winged with immortal
pinions,
And a falling blossom seemed an eternal
thing.

Because you went beside me, touching
lightly
White plumed apple blossoms with whiter
hand,
Leafy ways seemed full of eternal sun-
light,
The lawn we wandered over a faery land.

Because you went beside me, laughing
lightly,
Circling ripples of sound to a silent shore,
Sorrow went winging away from my heart
for ever,
Home to the silence winging for evermore.

THE HERDSMAN

O herdsman driving your slow twilight
flock

By darkening meadow and hedge and
grassy rath ;

The trees stand shuddering as you pass
by ;

The suddenly falling silence is your path.

Over my heart too, the shadows are creep-
ing ;

But on my heart for ever they will lie ;

O happy meadows and trees and rath and
hedges,

The twilight and all its flock will pass you
by.

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The twilight people,



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